

THE
PRESENT STATE
OF *Joseph Priestley*
LIBERTY
IN
GREAT BRITAIN
AND HER
COLONIES.

*Heu miseri cives, non Hostem, inimicaque castra,
Vestras Spes Uritis.*

VIRGIL.

BY AN ENGLISHMAN.

A NEW EDITION, Corrected.

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Thomas Holts, Esq.
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THE
P R E F A C E.

IT is of great importance, that all persons, who are the subjects of government, should have a just idea of their natural and civil rights, and that they should be apprized when they are invaded. As few of the pieces that I have seen on the subject of government in general, or concerning the attempts which have lately been made on the liberty of this country, are sufficiently plain and intelligible, I have endeavoured to supply the defect, by treating of these subjects in the way of *question and answer*, which gives me an opportunity of touching the true state of the litigated points in a clearer manner than any other method.

I have not, knowingly, misrepresented any facts, the reflections I have made upon them are such as I could not avoid, and the liberty I have taken, with the measures of government, is no greater than the constitution of this kingdom both admits, and requires. Any thing farther than this, is no concern of mine. I shall contentedly, and chearfully,

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leave

leave the issue to the merits of the cause, and to that good providence which disposes of all things.

Sincerely do I deplore the infatuation of those who were the authors of the measures that I have animadverted upon, but more that of those who persist in carrying them on, notwithstanding their consequences are, every day, more and more alarming. In this I have a view, chiefly, to our late measures respecting North America, a case in which every man, woman, and child among us, and our posterity, to the latest generation, are deeply interested.

Pity it is, that the iron hand of oppression should be extended to those people, whom nothing but a love of freedom induced to leave their native clime, in the arbitrary reigns of our former princes! How preposterous is it, that those, who glory in a free constitution for themselves, should wish for a power over *their fellow subjects*, which would make them the most abject slaves, of which there is any account in history; that a *commercial nation* should take measures to cut off the greatest source of their own *wealth*; and that a nation which, on many accounts, stands in need of *peace*, should, in asserting her unjust claims, provoke a *contest*, which, (if the Americans be the genuine offspring of Britons) cannot but be attended with the most pernicious consequences to both. Earnestly therefore

therefore must every friend to Great Britain and the Colonies (whose interest is the same) pray, that this dreadful and unnatural struggle may be prevented, by the success of their constitutional, loyal, and peaceable efforts for freedom; for securing their natural rights as men, and the civil rights which they have hitherto enjoyed as Englishmen.

GLADLY would I indulge a more chearful prospect, both with respect to America and Great Britain. The *tree of liberty*, I trust, has taken too deep root in both countries, not to be able to stand the shock of a few storms, before it be quite overturned. I hope it can be nothing more than a temporary delusion that we are permitted to labour under, and that the united voice of a loyal people, humbly petitioning for the security of their invaluable rights, will at length be heard. The *folly*, if not the *iniquity*, of all attempts to enslave a great and magnanimous nation, or any part of it, is surely, too glaring, not to be seen, before they can be put in execution.

IF, notwithstanding this, the time should be approaching (tho' I hope it is still at a great distance) when, as Montesquieu has prophesied, this country shall lose its liberty, yet, while the precious moments of freedom remain, let us, at least, indulge ourselves in the gloomy satisfaction of reviewing the infamy, which has always sooner or later over-

whelmed the authors, or promoters, of their country's ruin, whether they were kings and their tools the ministers, or (as I have shewn to be, in all cases, more justly suspected) they were ministers and their tools the kings.

IN circumstances so discouraging, all the consolation we can have, must be derived from the consideration of the *unsearchable ways of divine providence*, and the gracious designs of that great being, who can bring good out of the greatest seeming evil. And most earnestly do I pray, that he *who has the hearts of princes in his hands, and who turns them as rivers of water which way soever he pleases*, may give those who have done wrong understanding to see, and virtue to acknowledge their errors and injustice; that the spirit of discord, which seems to be gone forth among us, may be restrained; and that the present distractions of this country may issue in the real good of all its inhabitants.

FOR my own part, I cannot help saying, that, if such measures, as have for some time been adopted, continue to influence the British ministry, I shall make little account of my privileges as an *Englishman*; and, I trust, shall think more of those which are infinitely more valuable, and less precarious, those which I hope for as a *christian*, and a citizen of heaven.

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PRESENT STATE
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SECTION I.

Of Government in general.

Qu. WHAT is a *Society*?

An. A *society* consists of a number of persons united by their common interest, and by the use of the same measures to promote that interest.

Qu. What are the advantages of *society*?

An. Without the aid of *society*, a single person would not, in many cases, be able to procure a redress of his grievances, or many of the conveni-

encies of life, both of which may be accomplished by the wisdom and strength of a whole community. Biassed by a regard to their separate interests; men, unconnected with society, would think differently concerning their own rights, and those of their neighbours, and there being no persons to whom an appeal could be made, the dispute would either terminate in violence and blood, or the weaker must yield to the imposition and oppression of the stronger.

Qu. Who are the *supreme magistrates* of a state?

An. *Supreme magistrates* are those persons who act in the name of, and for the public, in those cases in which it would be impossible, or inconvenient, for all the members of the society to assemble, and act for themselves.

Qu. How far does the power of the supreme magistrates extend?

An. As the supreme magistrates represent the whole society, their power is the same with that of the society itself; and the good of the society being the great object and end of their union, the magistrates have the same power of doing every thing which they think conducive to that end, that the people themselves would have, if they could be assembled for that purpose.

Qu. Are the supreme magistrates, then, subject to no controul whatever?

An. The supreme magistrates being appointed by the people, in order to do their business, they are necessarily to be considered as *the servants of the people*, who have, therefore, a right to call them to account, if they do not answer the great ends for which they were appointed.

Qu. What things should the public laws, or the regulations of the supreme magistrates respect?

An.

An. As the end of society, and consequently of the institution of magistracy, is *the good of the whole body*; laws, or public regulations, should respect those things only in which the wisdom and strength of the society can be exerted to the advantage of the members of it.

Qu. Is it not better, in all cases, to have recourse to the wisdom and strength of the whole, than to depend upon the prudence and force of individuals?

An. No, there are many cases in which this interference of magistracy would produce the greatest confusion, embarrassment and distress; as, for instance, if the magistrates should forbid parents to punish their children, or their servants, and take the whole business of correction upon themselves; if they should prescribe what medicines should be taken in particular disorders, or appoint the physicians, to whose prescriptions we should, in all cases, be obliged to conform; or if they should dictate to us the object or mode of our religious worship, which respects our happiness not in this, but in a future state.

Qu. Does not every person, when he becomes a member of society, virtually surrender the power which he before enjoyed, of providing for his own security and happiness?

An. He does so; but only with respect to those things in which the public can make better provision for them than he could for himself; because the good of the whole requires this, and nothing more. Any power, therefore, which magistrates assume, farther than this, is tyranny, and an arbitrary invasion of men's natural rights.

Qu. What is the best security of these natural rights?

An. The great natural rights and liberties of mankind are best secured, when the supreme magistracy is in the hands of persons chosen by the people, and when they are entrusted with that power for a limited time. For if once the supreme magistracy fall into the hands of persons who are independent of the people, they may fancy that they have an interest separate from that of the people, in which case they will naturally usurp the rights of the people, and aggrandize themselves at their expence.

Qu. Is it necessary that all the people should have voices in the election of their supreme magistrates?

An. No, it will generally be sufficient, if the choice of magistrates be in the majority of those, whose circumstances render them above being corrupted, so as to give their votes in an improper manner. For when persons of this class provide for their own interest, they will necessarily provide for that of the society at large.

Qu. What is the first step that the people should take when they are oppressed by their governors, being either deprived of their natural rights, or of the only sure guard of them, the choice of their magistrates?

An. They must make strong remonstrances to those governors who have betrayed their trust, expressing their sense of the injustice that has been done them, and their abhorrence of the maxims of government by which they have been oppressed.

Qu. May a people go no farther than this, in order to obtain a redress of national grievances?

An. In general, this will be sufficient; for no person, who is not entirely divested of the common feelings of mankind, will bear to live abhorred by his fellow citizens, and to die with infamy

famy intailed upon his name and posterity. But if, through the insatiation of governors, intoxicated with power, these means should be insufficient to obtain the end, nothing hinders that a people, thus grossly abused, and insulted by their magistrates (who, by whatever name they are distinguished, are, in fact, nothing more than their *servants*) should strip them of their power, and confer it where they have reason to hope it will be less abused. It was this principle which justified, and effected the glorious *revolution*, and gave our forefathers a happy relief from the tyranny and oppressions of James II.

Qu. In what countries is it most difficult to oppose the attempts of tyrannical magistrates?

An. In countries of great extent, in which the people live at a great distance from one another, so that they can never assemble, or by any other means act in concert, and combine against their tyrants; and where also the magistrates must necessarily be intrusted with great power, and have a great number of officers under them, who will generally be attached to their interest, and support their measures, be they ever so villainous and oppressive. So great are the advantages of which the sovereign is possessed in these circumstances, that there are few countries in the world, of considerable extent, which are not at this day in a state of actual slavery, the people having neither any power of arriving at the supreme magistracy themselves, or votes in the nomination of those magistrates. If the natural rights of those people are, in any measure, preserved, it is because the prince does not think it worth his while to molest them, or because the spirit and customs of the times have given them a sanction, which he hath not the courage to violate. Abject slaves as the Turks

are, they have many privileges, which the grand Seignior dares not invade.

Qu. Whether are *kings*, or *ministers* more justly suspected of designs upon the liberties of a people?

An. In general the ministers: for in all arbitrary governments, it is the minister who is, in fact, possessed of the chief power of the state, while the prince has nothing but the name, and the pageantry of it. Those princes, therefore, who listen to their pernicious advice, are, in reality, submitting their own necks, and those of their posterity, to the yoke of their servants. For such is the condition of human affairs, that, in all successions of sovereign princes, *nine* have been weak, and governed by others, for *one* who has been able to govern himself. Indeed in arbitrary monarchies, the chance of having able princes is, on many accounts, much less than in other states.

SECTION II.

Of the State of Liberty in England.

Qu. **W**HAT are the outlines of the constitution of Great Britain?

An. Great Britain is a country in which the supreme magistracy is lodged in the three estates of the realm, one of which is the *King*, and is hereditary, another the house of *Lords*, who are such, either by inheritance, or the king's pleasure, and the third is the House of *Commons*, who (though imperfectly and unequally) represent the people.

Qu. What is meant by the *king's prerogative*?

An. The king's prerogative is by no means a discretionary power of doing what he thinks to be right,

right, in things that are not expressly provided for by law. The prerogative is a branch of the common law of the land, enabling the king to do those acts only, which it has been customary for the king to perform, and, like any other article of common law, is to be ascertained by precedent. It would be no free government, if any thing was excepted from the jurisdiction of law, and submitted to the determination of arbitrary pleasure.

Qu. How is it said that *the king can do no wrong*?

An. The meaning of it is, that the king is not personally responsible for any measures of government, but the ministers who advised them. It is essential to the freedom of government, that all public measures should be imputed to persons who may be freely censured, and arraigned at the bar of the public. For if it were once admitted, that the king himself engaged in any public measures, of his own motion (since it is an allowed maxim that he can do no wrong) there could be no redress of grievances. It is absolutely, and obviously necessary, that a person who must not be supposed to do wrong, should never be supposed to do any thing.

Qu. Where lies the security which the bulk of the people enjoy for the continuance of their natural and civil rights?

An. In the house of commons, who are chosen by themselves. For the lords; whose number is filled up at the pleasure of the king, who must live in splendour, and whose younger sons, and numerous dependents, must be provided for by the court, may be expected to be, in general, in the interest of the court.

Qu.

Qu. What is it that the people of England have most to fear, as being most liable to subject them to arbitrary power?

An. The corruption of their representatives; for when once it shall be in the power of the court to secure, by places or pensions, a majority in the house of commons, that house will no longer represent the sentiments of the people, but the pleasure of the king only. And then this important branch of the legislature will not only become insignificant, with respect to its original intention, but will be the most dangerous engine of oppression; Britons, like the Romans under the emperors, will be enslaved, with all the external badges of freedom.

Qu. What are the circumstances respecting the house of commons, which give thinking men the most reason to apprehend, that we are approaching to this dreadful situation?

An. The great number of placemen and pensioners, and of those who are in expectation of emoluments of that kind, in that house. These never fail to second the measures of the administration whatever they are. To this is added the long continuance of their power, viz. for *seven years*, which was originally an arbitrary usurpation of the rights of the people, and which makes it worth their while to lay out great sums of money to secure a seat, which, in such a number of years, is sure to afford them an opportunity of reimbursing themselves with advantage.

Qu. How comes it to pass, that it is in the power of the court to get so many of their partisans into the house, when the members of it represent the people, and are elected by them?

An. It arises from so great a majority of the members being chosen by the inhabitants, or free-men

men of inconsiderable towns, the sole property of which is in the hands of some of the lords, or other adherents to the court, who can oblige them to return whoever they shall direct.

Qu. As you seemed to represent our *political rights*, as of use only to guard our *natural and civil rights*, and that, in some cases, these are sufficiently guarded by the spirit of the times, and other circumstances that controul a tendency to despotism, notwithstanding the people have no share in the legislature; are we so happy as to have no reason to apprehend any thing from the loss of our political liberty? Do the persons who are in administration seem disposed to make any attempts upon our privileges as men and Englishmen?

An. The ministry of Great Britain have, of late years, made many alarming attacks upon the essential rights and privileges of the subject; and there is not, as yet, any prospect of their being called to account for their illegal and arbitrary proceedings.

Qu. What are the great privileges of Englishmen, which have been infringed by them?

An. 1. They have evaded the operation of the great writ of *Habeas Corpus*, whereby a person accused of any crime cannot be detained in custody, but must be brought immediately to a court of law, and be admitted to bail (if the offence be of such a nature as to be bailable) till he can be tried according to law.

2. They have, by a *general warrant*, in which no person was said to have been accused upon oath, or so much as named, arrested the person of an Englishman, and a member of the house of commons, removing him from the custody of one person to that of another, and confined him without admitting his nearest friends to speak to him.

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By the same warrant they seized all his private papers, and out of them, thus illegally procured, collected evidence for a crime, which supposes that he himself published those papers.

3. They restrict the liberty of the press, that great security for every other branch of our liberty, and the scourge of their arbitrary proceedings, by construing all censures upon them, and their measures, into *libels*, and procuring the authors of them to be severely punished.

4. They have, in these cases of libels, contrived to evade the great privilege of Englishmen, that of being tried by his peers, in the method of *jury*, not daring to trust the issue of such base prosecutions to the impartial judgment of their countrymen; and, in the place of it, they have extended the methods of trial by *attachment*, *information*, and *interrogatories*, in which juries are not used, and which are conducted in a manner as unfavourable to liberty, as the inquisition in the church of Rome, and the odious star-chamber under the Steuarts.

5. The great *bill of rights* has been invaded by a repeated refusal, to admit the first county in England, to judge of the fitness of the person who shall represent them in parliament; and one whom they had freely chosen has been excluded, tho' guilty of no crime that was not publicly known at the time of election, and none for which the law had not had its full satisfaction.

6. Recourse has unnecessarily been had to that great engine of arbitrary power, a *military force*, in a manner contrary to the genius and spirit of our constitution; and where a band of *ruffians* were hired to disturb the freedom of an election of a county member, in favour of the ministers, and great violences and murder were committed, two
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of the *murderers* (convicted and condemned in a court of justice) had his Majesty's *free pardon*.

Qu. What can the people do in such a situation of their affairs, when their most valuable rights seem to be in danger?

An. In these circumstances every man, who wishes well to his country, should contribute liberally to the support of all that suffer in the common cause of liberty, and spread the alarm thro' the whole kingdom, in order to make all the people thoroughly sensible of the impending danger. They must promote the sending of instructions to members of parliament, from all the free and independent electors, expressing their sentiments of the state of public affairs, and endeavour to get petitions for the redress of grievances, signed by all ranks and orders of men, who are unbiassed by court preferment, and have no expectations from that quarter, for themselves, or their friends. And there can be no doubt, but that the voice of the nation, rendered thus clear and audible, will be heard. No minister could bear to live in a country, in which he should see himself abhorred by all men of sense and virtue. The truth would, at length, reach the ear of our most gracious sovereign. He would listen to the reasonable requests of his loyal subjects. Both would again be happy in their mutual affection. Our affairs would be established by concord at home, and then no power on earth would dare to provoke our resentment.

Qu. What should be the immediate object of the friends of this country at this time, and what should be the principal articles in their instructions to their representatives in parliament?

An. As the foundation of all the preceding disorders, all placemen, court pensioners, and sons
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of the nobility, should be excluded the house of commons. The duration of the present, and of all future parliaments, should be shortened; if possible, the small boroughs should be abolished; and all the members should be elected in some such manner as by counties. Also the candidates should take the oath against bribery and corruption, and the election should be by ballot. Were these essential points once gained, all the rest would follow of course. Impeachments would be preferred against all those who should advise tyrannical and oppressive measures, and subsequent ministers would be deterred, by their punishment, from following their example. But if, in our present circumstances, the full establishment of our rights, for the future, could be procured, it would be well worth while to purchase it by an *act of indemnity*, and the oblivion of every thing that has hitherto been done in violation of them.

SECTION III.

Of the Affairs of AMERICA.

Qu. **H**AVE the members of the present administration extended their arbitrary measures beyond the bounds of Great Britain?

An. Yes, they are pursuing measures still more arbitrary and oppressive with the inhabitants of *North-America*.

Qu. What is the great grievance that those people complain of?

An. It is their being *taxed* by the parliament of Great Britain, the members of which are so far from taxing themselves, that they ease themselves

at

at the same time. If this measure takes place, the colonists will be reduced to a state of as complete servitude, as any people of which there is an account in history. For by the same power, by which the people of England can compel them to pay *one penny*, they may compel them to pay the *last penny* they have. There will be nothing but arbitrary imposition on the one side, and humble petition on the other.

Qu. Have not the people of North America been greatly benefited by the English? Was not the late expensive war undertaken on their account, and is it not reasonable that they should, at least, bear their share of the burden of it?

An. This is an argument very proper to be urged with the colonists, in case they should refuse to assist their mother country, but it is well known that, besides bearing very heavy taxes, imposed by their own houses of assembly, for the support of their own government, they have always been ready, of their own accord, to serve the common cause to the utmost of their ability, and, as some have thought, even beyond it. But admitting they had not done this, is not absolute slavery too great a punishment for their ingratitude?

Qu. Are there not many considerable towns in England, as *Leeds and Manchester*, which send no representatives to parliament, and yet, notwithstanding this, are taxed by them? What have the Americans to complain of more?

An. The representation of this country in parliament is acknowledged to be very unequal and imperfect; but the effect of this imperfection and inequality of representation, is of little consequence, so long as the persons who impose the tax upon others, impose it upon themselves at the same time; for if they feel nothing for others, they

they will feel for themselves. A parallel to the present case of the Americans, would be a tax upon those towns who send no representatives, or an exemption of those towns that do send members. In this case, would not *Leeds* and *Manchester* make as loud complaints as the people of North America do now? Would any motive, but that arising from the want of power, prevent their resisting the levying of such a tax, notwithstanding it should be passed into a bill, in the most regular and authentic manner, by all the three estates of the realm?

Q. Hath it not been the custom, in former times at least, for the English parliament to impose taxes on those provinces which sent no members to it.

An. By no means. Ireland, though a conquered country, always taxed itself, and doth so to this day. The king of England never does more than lay his wants before the Irish parliament, and he receives what they themselves think proper to give him. The Scots, also, taxed themselves before the union. Wales, a conquered country, did the same, and even the inhabitants of the counties palatine, before they, at their own request, sent members to represent them in the English House of Commons.

Qu. Does not the British parliament make laws that *restrict* the *commerce* of the Colonies, and may not this burden be equivalent to a tax?

An. The British parliament also makes laws that *restrict* the commerce of Ireland, but notwithstanding the near neighbourhood of this country (whereby we are pretty good judges of its circumstances) we never presumed to lay a direct tax upon it, nor indeed upon North America, till of late. Allowing that, eventually, there is no difference between these things, the one is a much
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more open and undisguised oppression than the other; and there is a degree to which any people will bear hardship without complaint; but oppression, beyond a certain degree, will make even a wise man mad. Such powers as, from their nature, must necessarily be lodged in one of the parts of the whole empire, the Colonists will never object to in Great Britain. The most absolute jurisdiction of this kind they would never complain of; and, provided the effects of it were not greatly oppressive, they would never think of nicely setting bounds to it. It may, perhaps, be impossible to fix precise boundaries to the authority of Great Britain over the Colonies, because it is not easy to determine what degree of power in the Mother Country would be the most beneficial to both; but the extremes, in a thousand cases of great importance (as in all questions concerning morals, virtue and vice) may be obvious, when the exact medium cannot be ascertained; and, in this case, moderation on both sides would make that very easy in practice, which is ever so difficult in theory.

Qu. What can the North Americans plead for an exemption from taxes imposed by the British parliament, but such *charters* as our kings have usually given to corporations, which are all of them liable to be regulated, or set aside by all the three estates of the realm?

An. Admitting that the privileges of the Colonists had no other origin, yet the continuance of this establishment such a number of years, and the fatal consequence of revoking it (which is nothing less than the absolute slavery of a whole people) ought to make their rights to be considered in a very different light from that of the charters of common corporations, the members of which are generally benefited by their abrogation. A
corporate

corporate town, generally bears a very small proportion to the whole state ; whereas all our North American Colonies bear a very great proportion to the whole, and, in all probability, will, at no great distance of time, be equal to all the rest put together. And it ought not to be forgotten, that it is the good of *the whole empire*, considered as one, which should be the object of government, and not the aggrandizement of any particular part. If other maxims prevail, one part of the empire will be the seat of despotism, and all the other subjects will be slaves,

Qu. In all disputes between Great Britain and her Colonies, must not Great Britain, tho' she be only one part of the whole united empire, be, of necessity, the *judge* ; and should not the Colonies, therefore, submit to her decision ? Who can be umpire between them ?

An. It is true, things are so circumstanced, that in all disputes, Great Britain must, of course, be the judge ; because she has the *power* of enforcing the sentence ; but she cannot act in that capacity, contrary to the clear sense of the Colonies, without asserting an undisguised tyranny and arbitrary power. Tho' Great Britain be the stronger of the two, she should let *reason* be judge between them, and not take advantage of mere strength, to oppress those who are not able to resist her unjust decrees. If (to recur to the case I put before) the parliament of Great Britain should lay a tax upon Leeds, Manchester, or any other town, that sends no representatives to parliament ; or if the three estates should concur to deprive any particular subject of his natural and civil rights (for instance, his right of being elected to serve his country in parliament) or if they should deprive a borough or county of its right to send representatives in these cases, Great Britain would, likewise, assume the office

office of judge. There could be no appeal from the sentence, and the particular person, the town, or the county would submit; but they would give way as they would to a tempest, a torrent, or a hurricane, which they were not able to resist, and they would relieve themselves the first opportunity.

Qu. But is not the *advantage* accruing to Great Britain from this taxation of America, a plausible pretence for having recourse to so oppressive a measure?

An. By no means. The acquisition by taxes is, and always will be, inconsiderable, and is infinitely overbalanced by the *loss of trade*, arising from the disaffection of the Colonies to their Mother Country, and their consequent aversion to take our commodities.

Qu. What is supposed to be the amount of our trade to our Colonies?

An. I think I have heard it computed at about *one-sixth of our whole commerce*; and provided the inhabitants of North America multiply as they have done hitherto (and there is a prospect of their increasing even faster, as they have now more room to extend themselves, without fear of the French) in less than a century, it will not be in the power of Great Britain to supply their demand for manufactures, were all her inhabitants employed in them.

Qu. But will not the Colonists chuse to manufacture for themselves?

An. It is far from being their interest to commence manufacturers, and nothing but necessity can drive them to it. Land is so cheap, that every man is ambitious of acquiring property in it. Few hands, therefore, being at liberty to apply to labour or manufactures, their work is so dear, that it will always be for their interest to purchase of us, rather than supply themselves, till the whole country be fully peopled, which is a period too remote for attention.

Qu.

Qu. What seem to be the best, the most equitable, and advantageous maxims to be observed by Great Britain, with respect to our Colonies?

An. The most equitable maxims, as well as the best policy, in our conduct to the Americans, is to lay aside all jealousy of them, not even to indulge the idea of *superiority*, and to consult the good of the whole, as of *one united empire*, each part of which has the same natural right to liberty and happiness with the other; to encourage agriculture among them, and manufactures among ourselves, and by no means interfere in their interior government, so far as to lay any tax upon them, either for the purpose of raising a revenue, or for any other purpose whatever. The benefits arising *spontaneously* from our extensive and increasing commerce with them, will infinitely overbalance all that we shall ever be able to extort from them by way of *tax*. Thus shall we be mutually the source of strength and opulence to each other, and nothing, in the ordinary course of Divine Providence, but a wrong-headed and tyrannical administration, can hinder our being the most flourishing, and the happiest state upon the face of the earth.

Qu. But have we not gone too far to *recede*, without coming to extremities?

An. It is never too late for any man, or body of men, to repent of, and rectify, what they are convinced they have done amiss. Let us, at least, virtually acknowledge it, by generously cancelling all that is past, and suffering things to remain for the future as they were some years ago. (Happy years of mutual love and confidence!) This will not fail to secure the gratitude and affection of the Colonists. Nay more, having seen our errors, and repented of them, there will be a better foundation laid for mutual confidence than ever.

Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio est.